ALIENS

2 (of 6)
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ALIENS™

Based on characters and situations from the Twentieth Century Fox motion picture.

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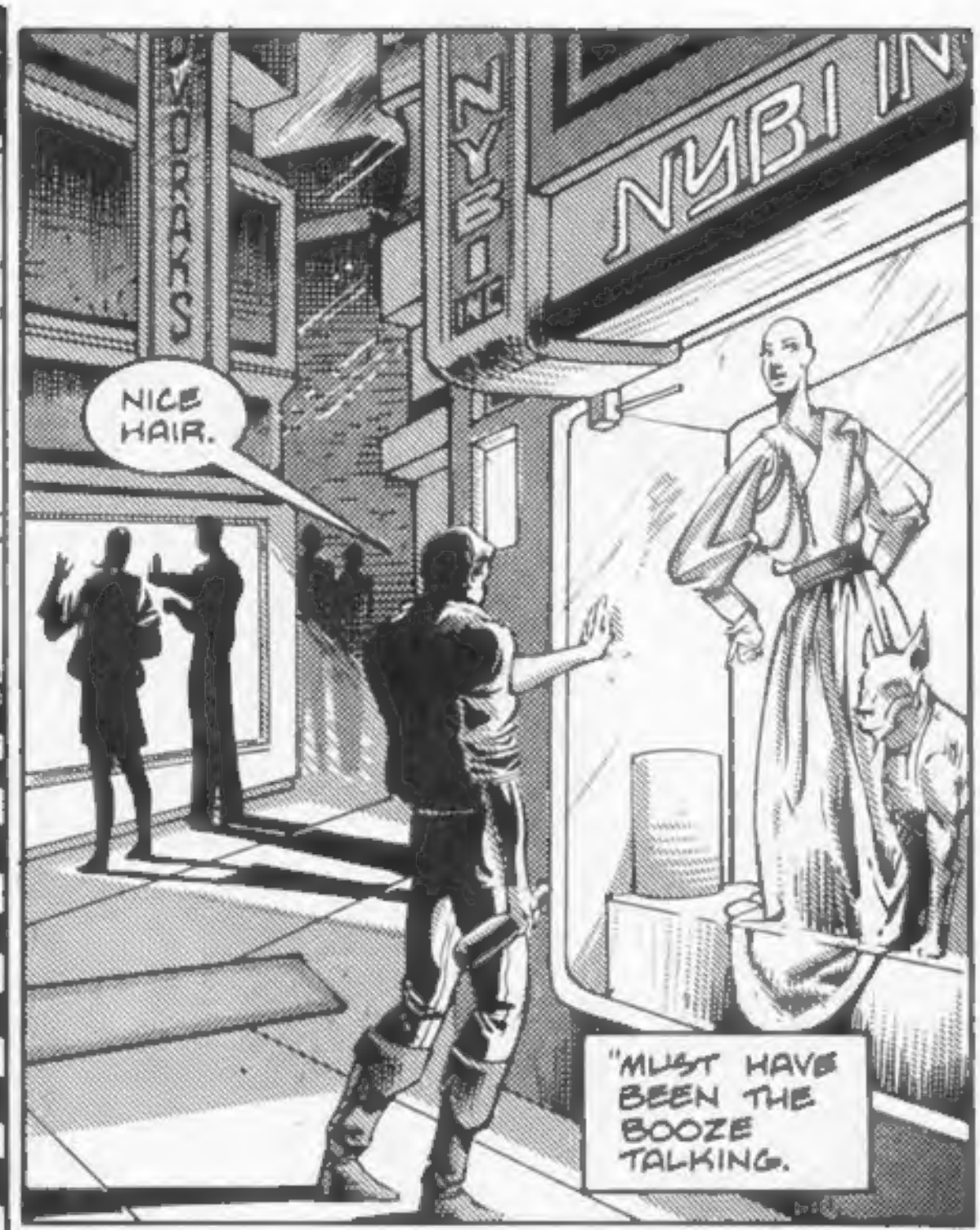
I'M BLIND!
GET IT OFF-- JESUS-- JESUS-- CAN'T BREA--
YOU'RE MY CAPTAIN, BRAVE LITTLE CAPTAIN...
SO SCARED--! PAIN-- CAN'T SEE--!
FLY, FLY AWAY, MY BRAVE LITTLE CAPTAIN--
I...I REMEMBER THAT SONG. MY MOTHER USED TO SING IT WHEN I WAS SMALL--
PAIN'S GOING AWAY. GOD. I FEEL-- WARM NOW.
I'M NOT SCARED ANYMORE. I DON'T HAVE TO BE.
SHE'S GOING TO TAKE CARE OF ME.

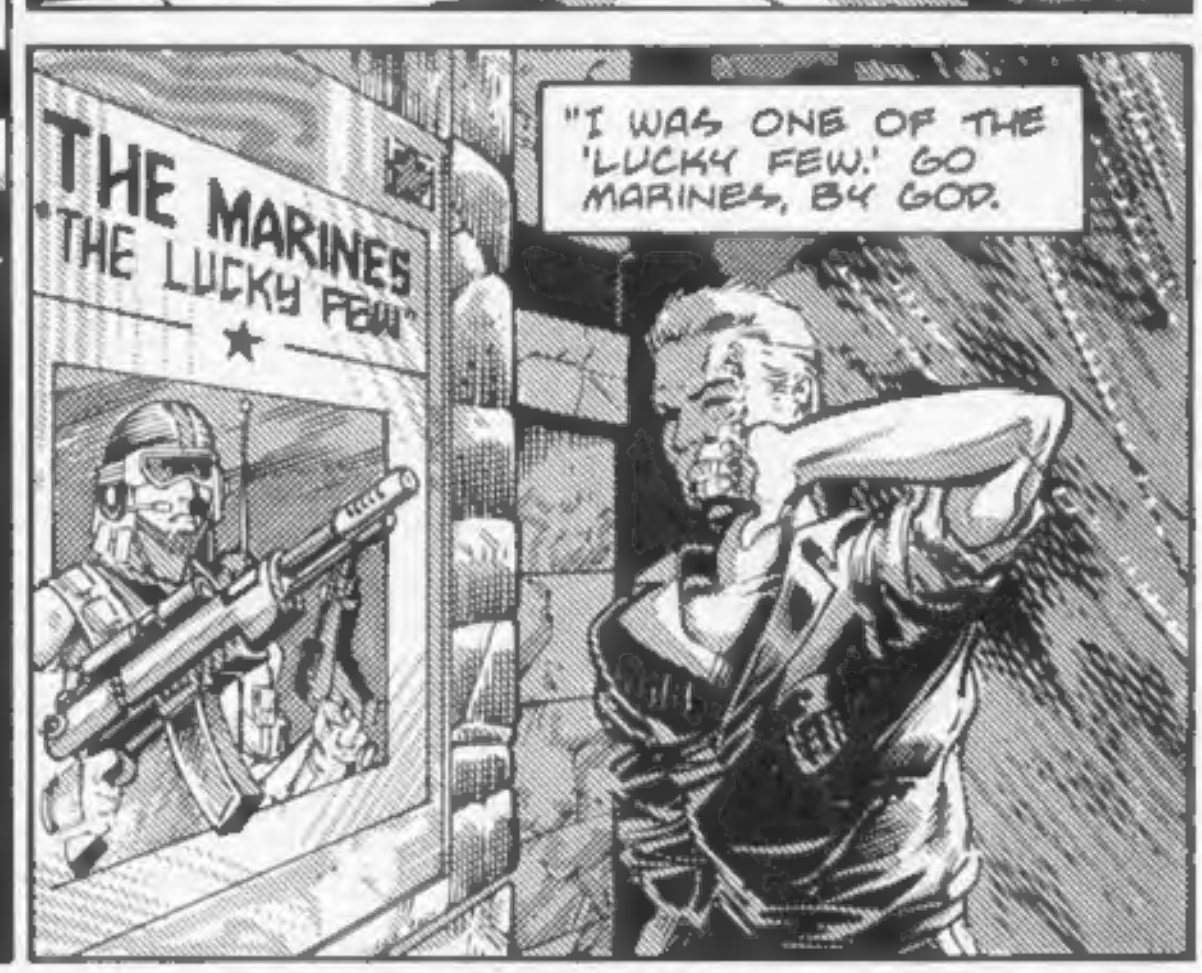
"IT'S SO WARM. I'M PART OF SOMETHING NEW AND BETTER. I KEEP REMEMBERING MY MOTHER.
"YOU SPEND YOUR LIFE TRYING TO FORGET THE WARMTH OF THE WOMB. BUT THE WORLD'S SO EMPTY, SO COLD--
"I SEE IT SO CLEARLY NOW. I WAS HUNGERING FOR THE WARMTH AGAIN, FOR THAT ALMOST PRETERNATURAL TOGETHERNESS.
"WE PRETEND WITH OUR BODIES, BUT IT ISN'T THE SAME. IT CAN'T BE THE SAME.
"CAREER, JOB, HONOR, COUNTRY-- ALL FARCE. WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?
LIKOWSKI
"REALITY IS THE VAST LONLINESS OF OUR SOLITARY, COLD EXISTENCE.
Junket
CARGO EXPRESS
"I'M BLIND-- BUT I FINALLY SEE.

"I'M STARING AT THE CEILING. TRANKED AGAIN-- THORAPIN. I THINK. THE ONE THAT MAKES YOU FEEL LIKE YOU'RE SUFFOCATING.
"I RELIVE THE PAST AGAIN AND AGAIN. I WAS BORN ON A TERRAFORMER TRANSPORT IN DEEP SPACE. MY PARENTS NAMED ME REBECCA, BUT EVERYONE CALLED ME NEWT.
"OUR NEW HOME WAS A DESOLATE ROCK CHRISTENED ACHERON. MY PARENTS HAD VOLUNTEERED FOR THE MISSION IN THE ROMANTIC SPIRIT OF THE OLD EARTH PIONEERS, BUT THERE WAS LITTLE ROMANCE ON THAT CRUEL WORLD.
"THE WIND AND THE COLD MEANT NOTHING TO THE ALIENS. THEY WAITED, DORMANT, UNTIL THE TIME WAS RIGHT. I WAS THE ONLY SURVIVOR."

"I WAS FOUND BY A MARINE RESCUE TEAM AND RETURNED TO EARTH. THE DOCTORS LOST INTEREST IN ME WHEN I DIDN'T RESPOND TO THEIR TREATMENTS.
"I'M STARING AT THE CEILING. THERE'S A CIRCULAR LIGHT IN THE CENTER, HUMMING SOFTLY.
"CRACKS SPREAD ACROSS THE PLASTER, LIKE WRINKLES ON A OLD MAN'S FACE-- NO. LIKE THE WRINKLES ON MY FACE.
"SOME SEE SPACE AS A PANACEA-- UNCOUNTED WORLDS WITH UNTOLD RICHES. THEY LOOK TO THE HEAVENS AND SEE THE JOY OF OPPORTUNITY.
"I LOOK INTO SPACE AND SEE THE COLD VOID OF HELL, MY ONLY ESCAPE."
HICKS! DON'T LEAVE ME!

HICKS! DON'T LEAVE ME!
I'M NOT LEAVING, DARLIN'. I'VE LEFT.
RATES
HR 25
DAY 75
WK 555
"CHRIST, THAT WAS STUPID.
"WHAT THE HELL WAS WRONG WITH ME?
"I NEVER NEEDED ANYBODY BEFORE."


NICE HAIR.
"MUST HAVE BEEN THE BOOZE TALKING.


THE MARINES
"THE LUCKY FEW"
"I WAS ONE OF THE 'LUCKY FEW.' GO MARINES, BY GOD.

"I KEEP REMEMBERING ACHERON. DRAKE, VASQUEZ-- EVEN THAT ASS, HUDSON-- THEY WERE OKAY.
"OKAY, HELL THEY WERE BUDDIES. AND I LET THEM ALL DIE.

"I HAD TO STAY CLEAR, KEEP THE FOCUS. I'D BEEN WAITING FOR MY CHANCE TO GET THOSE ALIEN BASTARDS EVER SINCE I CAME BACK.

"I COULDN'T SCREW UP NOW, COULDN'T COMPLICATE IT.
"SORRY, NEWT. I GO.
"YOU STAY."

I UNDERSTAND YOU THINK HICKS MAY BE A PROBLEM.

MAY BE? HELL, THE MAN'S BEEN BUCKING FOR A PSYCH DISCHARGE EVER SINCE HE CAME BACK FROM ACHERON.

SPECIAL SECTIONS

LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE GOT A PROBLEM, STEPHENS. COMMAND'S SOLD ON THE GUY.

YEAH--THEY THINK HE'S THE BIG TOUGH MONSTER KILLER.

CREW KILLER IS MORE LIKE IT.

OFFICER

IT'S NOT LIKE THE ACHERON MISSION WAS A *SUCCESS*. HELL, THE ONLY SURVIVORS WERE A KID, A CIVILIAN NAMED RIPLEY AND HICKS.

THE KID'S A BRAIN CASE AND *RIPLEY*-- WELL YOU KNOW WHAT BECAME OF HER.

WHICH MEANS HICKS IS THE ONLY EXPERIENCED HAND AVAILABLE.

CHECK-POINT SECTION A1

STEPHENS

COMMAND'S MOVED HIM IN WITH THE GRUNTS AND HE'S SUPERVISING LOADING OPERATIONS.

ARGAR 565

I DON'T *NEED* HIS KIND OF EXPERIENCE. C'MON, BILL, YOU'VE STILL GOT SOME PULL OVER AT--

WHAT THE HELL IS THIS, STEPHENS? YOU DON'T LIKE HICKS? CROSS HIM OFF YOUR PARTY LIST. BUT HE'S GOT THE EXPERIENCE AND HE'S GOT THE MISSION. *UNDERSTOOD?*

YESSIR. UNDERSTOOD.

SOLDIER! WHAT ARE THOSE CRATES?

PLASMA RIFLES, SIR! THIRTY-FIVE CHARGERS AND TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND PACKS PER CORPORAL HICKS' REQUEST--

HAVE CORPORAL HICKS MEET ME IN THE SKY OFFICE. *NOW.*

PLAS

JUST WHO IN THE HELL AUTHORIZED PLASMA WEAPONS, CORPORAL?

I WAS TOLD TO PREPARE THE SHIP-- SIR.

BLASTERS ARE NOTORIOUSLY UNSTABLE AND GROSSLY DESTRUCTIVE. WE'RE COLLECTING *SPECIMENS*, NOT *PIECES*.

PERHAPS YOUR PREVIOUS--*EXPERIENCE*-- HAS DISTORTED YOUR JUDGEMENT.

FIRST TIME YOU FACE OFF WITH ONE OF THOSE THINGS, YOU'LL WISH YOU HAD SOMETHING *STRONGER*.

MAYBE COMMAND'S IMPRESSED WITH YOU BUT I'M NOT. I WON'T JEOPARDIZE THE MISSION OR THE SHIP WITH THOSE BLASTERS.

TAKE THEM *OFF*.

ANY OTHER NEWS ON THAT MERGER PROPOSAL WE SENT OVER WITH MASSEY?

I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU. THEY WENT FOR IT.

SWASH!

GOTCHA!

WENT FOR IT?

YEAH. LOWER PRICE PER SHARE, TOO. I GUESS MASSEY CONVINCED THEM OUR OFFER WAS GOOD BUSINESS.

SWIMM WOLK!

GOOD MATCH.

YEAH. I ALMOST WORKED UP A SWEAT.

LISTEN, TED, I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THE BIOWARFARE PROJECT.

ANY MOVEMENT FROM THE GOVERN-MENT?

YOU KNOW THOSE GOVERNMENT GUYS. HUSH-HUSH, BIG SECRET.

THEY WANT TO GRAB THE LIFEFORM PATENT FOR THEMSELVES.

CAN'T HAVE *THAT*.

ALIEN LIFEFORMS ARE THE NEXT STEP IN COMPETITIVE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONRY.

WE'VE ALREADY GOT INTEREST FROM CANADA, JAPAN, IRELAND--AND THE THIRD WORLD'S GOING *APE*.

I WANT SOMEONE SPECIAL TO LOOK AFTER OUR INTERESTS. MASSEY DID A GOOD JOB ON THE MERGER. TELL ME ABOUT HIM.
PAT-- COFFEE'LL BE READY IN A MINUTE.
DADDY--WHY DO THEY CALL IT 'THE WALL STREET JOURNAL'?
MBA FROM HARVARD, DOCTORATE IN LAW FROM CORNELL-- HE COULD HAVE HAD HIS PICK OF THE BIG TWO COMPANIES.
MONEY-- DON'T BE LATE!
INSTEAD HE ENLISTED IN THE MARINES, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE
SILVER STAR FOR BRAVERY DURING THE OIL WAR COUPLE HUNDRED CONFIRMED KILLS--
GOOD MORNING, MISTER MASSEY!
HE DIDN'T ENLIST OUT OF PATRIOTISM HE LIKED IT.
HE HAD MORE DECORATIONS THAN A CHRISTMAS TREE, THEN SUDDENLY, HE WAS COURT MARTIALED.
SEEMS HE TRIED TO KILL HIS COMMANDING OFFICER FOR FAILING TO ORDER HIS SQUAD TO ATTACK A CIVILIAN ENCAMPMENT
WE PAID OFF THE MILITARY TRIBUNAL AND HIRED HIM IMMEDIATELY. IT'S RARE WHEN YOU FIND A MAN WHO LOVES HIS WORK

THE DARKNESS IS A BLANKET
SOMETHING RAPE LIKE SWEAT ALL WARM AND STICKY
IT FEELS GOOD
FLY, FLY AWAY, MY BRAVE LITTLE CAPTAIN--
WE WERE ONE GOD, I LOVED YOU.
THEN I WAS TORN FROM YOU, FORCED INTO THIS NAKED EXISTENCE, SO ALONE AND COLD I NEVER THOUGHT I'D FEEL THAT LOVE AGAIN
MY TRUE MOTHER IS PART OF ME. I CAN FEEL HER, SLIDING WET IN MY THROAT, FILLING MY LUNGS AND MY STOMACH, WRAPPING HER FINGERS INSIDE SO WARM, SO WARM--
HER TEETH GLITTER LIKE THE STARS GOD SHE IS IMPOSSIBLY BEAUTIFUL
SHE LOVES ME MORE THAN YOU EVER COULD

EAGLEY! TRY TO CIRCLE BEHIND THE BUNKER AND FIND A SERVICE PORT! WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO BLAST THROUGH IT.

ROGER THAT. COVER ME!

I'VE ZEROED THE AFT PLATE. I'M GOING IN ON THREE

COPY

ONE...

TWO...

KRAKOOM!

YEAH! DEAD ON, BUDDY! WE MUST HAVE CUT THE MAIN LINE!

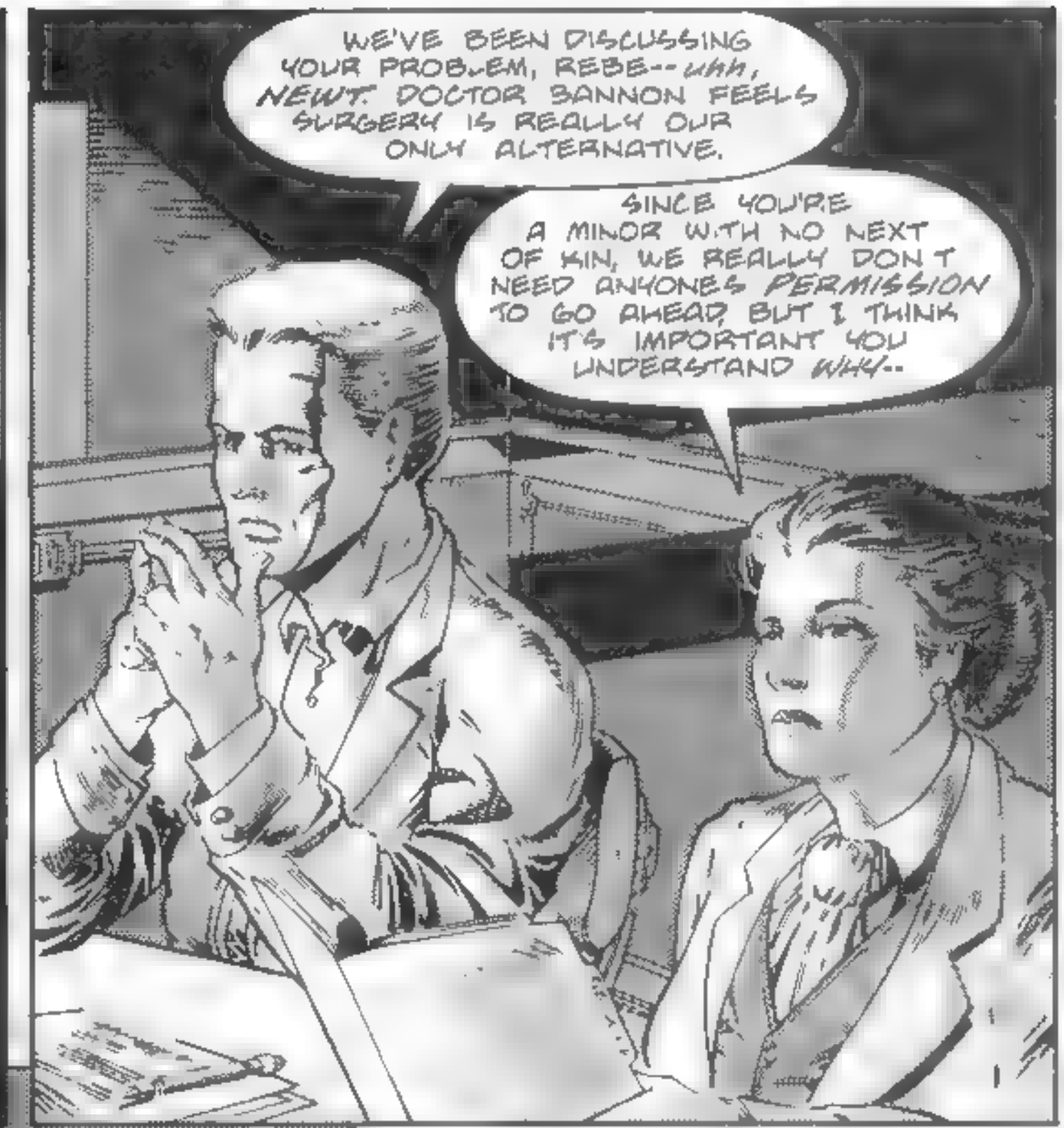
YEAH DEAD ON BUDDY

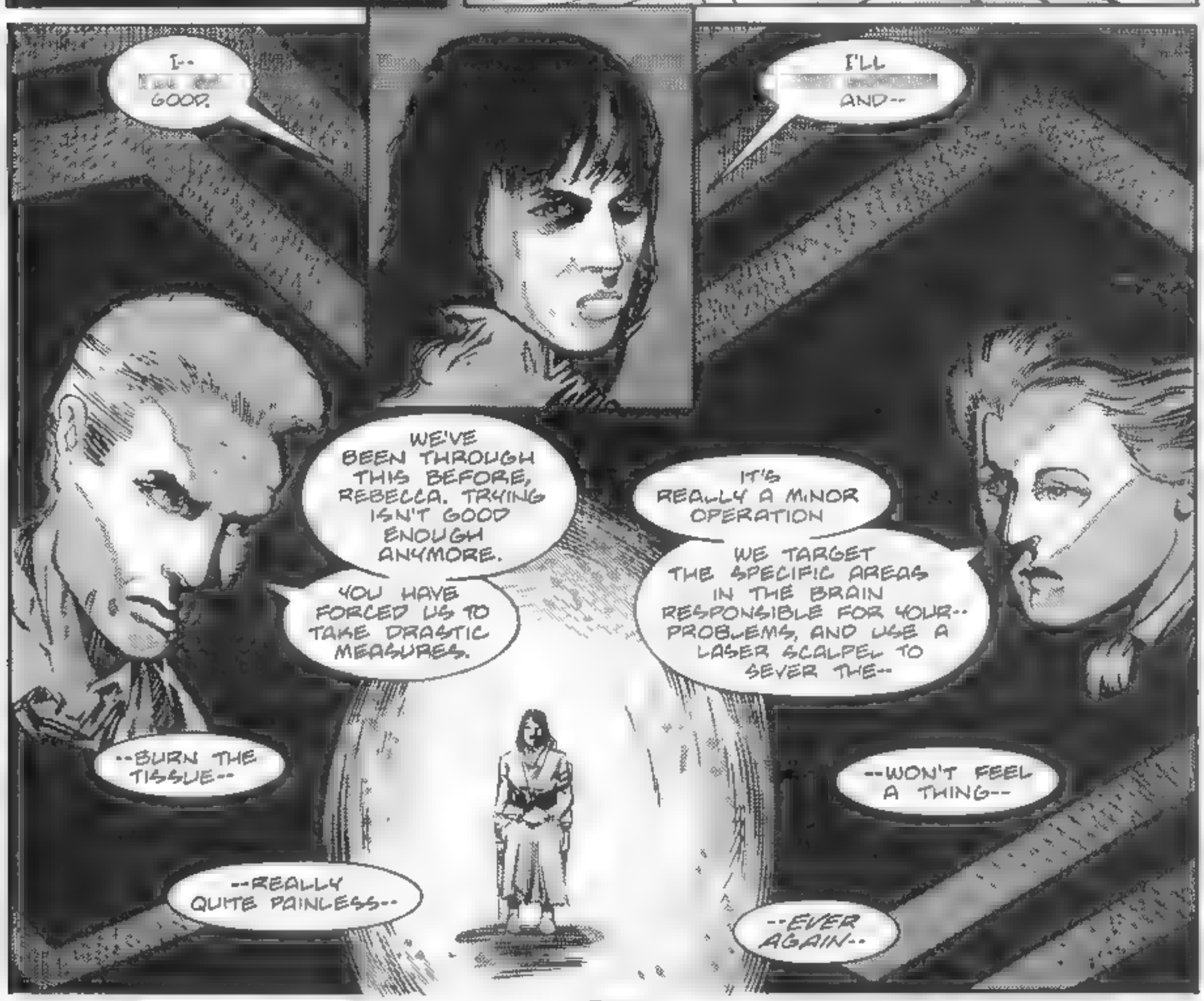
AIGGGH!

DAMN CORPORAL HICKS
GET YOUR ASS OUT OF THE MUD BEFORE YOU SHORT THE WHOLE SUIT.
BUTLER AND EASLEY WERE STUPID YOU DONT ASSUME ANYTHING IN COMBAT.
YEAH, THEY TOOK OUT THE REMOTES AND THE TARGETING SYSTEM AND THEY'RE STILL DEAD
CLEAR TO YOU BLAKE?
A REAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE.
I CAN SEE YOU'RE MOVED. IN HONOR OF BUTLER'S DEATH, WE'RE GOING TO SPEND THE REST OF THE DAY ON THE COURSE MAYBE SOME OF THIS WILL SINK IN.
OH JEZUZ..
THANKS A LOT, BUTTLER

"I WAS IMPRESSED. EVERYONE ON THE SQUAD WAS TOP RATED IN ORDINANCE--BLINDERS, PROJECTORS, LOW LEVEL NEUTRON STUFF AND ALL THE CONVENTIONALS. DOC ORONA HAD PUT SOME THOUGHT INTO THIS."
C'MON, BLAKE, GET IT UP AND OVER--!
"THEY'D BEEN WORKING AS A UNIT SINCE INCEPTION. JUST OVER A YEAR. IT SHOWED.
RUM!
BRRRRACKKKKK!
FUNNY HOW MUCH THEY REMINDED ME OF THE ACHERON TEAM."
MOVE IT!
"I KEPT THINKING ABOUT ACHERON, REMEMBERING WHAT IT WAS LIKE TO BE PART OF A TEAM, TO HAVE FRIENDS WHO WOULD DIE FOR YOU, FRENDS WHO--
"--NO! FORGET ACHERON. MY FRIENDS WERE DEAD. REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED AFTER--THE PAIN, THE LONELINESS. THIS WASN'T ABOUT DUTY, HONOR, LOYALTY--THIS WAS FOR ME AND NO ONE ELSE."

THANK YOU, OFFICER. PLEASE HAVE A SEAT, REBECCA
MY NAME'S NEWT.


WE'VE BEEN DISCUSSING YOUR PROBLEM, REBE-- uhh, NEWT. DOCTOR BANNON FEELS SURGERY IS REALLY OUR ONLY ALTERNATIVE.
SINCE YOU'RE A MINOR WITH NO NEXT OF KIN, WE REALLY DON'T NEED ANYONE'S PERMISSION TO GO AHEAD, BUT I THINK IT'S IMPORTANT YOU UNDERSTAND WHY--


I-- GOOD.
I'LL AND--
WE'VE BEEN THROUGH THIS BEFORE, REBECCA. TRYING ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH ANYMORE.
YOU HAVE FORCED US TO TAKE DRASTIC MEASURES.
IT'S REALLY A MINOR OPERATION
WE TARGET THE SPECIFIC AREAS IN THE BRAIN RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR-- PROBLEMS, AND USE A LASER SCALPEL TO SEVER THE--
--BURN THE TISSUE--
--REALLY QUITE PAINLESS--
--WON'T FEEL A THING--
--EVER AGAIN--

OH HELL.

"LESS THAN TWELVE HOURS TO LIFT OFF I TOLD STEPHENS I HAD SOME LAST MINUTE BUSINESS OFF BASE.

WARD-C

FELDREST HOME

"HE WASN'T HAPPY, BUT WHAT WAS HE GOING TO DO? FIRE ME?

"TWELVE MORE HOURS AND I WOULD HAVE BEEN IN SPACE. I NEVER SHOULD HAVE SIGNED INTO THE SECURITY MAINFRAME. ACCESSING THE INSTITUTION'S PATIENT FILES WAS A PIECE OF CAKE. I GUESS I WAS CURIOUS."

HEY--

HEY, YOU HAVE TO PASS THE RETINAL AND V/C SCAN BEFORE--

SORRY. TIGHT SCHEDULE.

"WHY'D I SEE HER IN THE FIRST PLACE? MAYBE I THOUGHT SHE'D *UNDERSTAND*-- MAYBE I JUST WANTED SOMEONE HERE TO *REMEMBER* ME WHEN IT WAS OVER--CHRIST, I DON'T KNOW--"

"THERE *WAS* A TIME WHEN LIVING AND DYING MEANT SOMETHING TO ME."

CALL SECURITY! CALL--

"MY OLD SQUAD-- HUDSON, VASQUEZ AND THE REST-- FACED HELL ITSELF TO RESCUE A SCARED LITTLE GIRL."

SEE MY FACE? SCARY, ISN'T IT? WHERE'S REBECCA?

ROOM 4017--BUT YOU--

OH, AND YOU CAN FORGET ABOUT OUTSIDE SECURITY. I DISCONNECTED THE DOWNLINK ABOUT AN HOUR AGO.

"NOW THEY WANTED TO DESTROY HER JESUS, MY FRIENDS *DIED* TO SAVE HER.

NICE TRY, QUICK-DRAW.

UGHHH--!

SSSZZZASSSKK!

"NEWT WAS THE ONLY THING *LEFT* OF THEM."

DROP YOUR SOCKS, KID WE'RE GOING FOR A RIDE

"NEWT'S ROOM WAS ON THE FORTIETH FLOOR OF THE MEDICAL HIGHRISE. EVEN WITH THE AUTOMATIC SECURITY SYSTEM BLINKED, THEY'D HAVE THE GROUND EXITS COVERED BY NOW."

DAMN, KID, YOU LOOK LIKE SHIT.

LOOK. WHO'S TALKING... *CUF* *CUF*...

WHA-- WHAT ARE YOU DOING--?

A LITTLE REMODELING, MARINE STYLE.

KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN! WE GO N E GHT!

PLOW!

CRACK!

HOLD TIGHT!

"THE WALL BLEW OUT FROM THE FORCE OF THE EXPLOSION AND WE WENT ALONG WITH THE NICE VIEW

BOOM

"THE JET RESCUE TECHNOLOGY HAD BEEN DEVELOPED AFTER THE WORLD TRADE CENTER SMOKED IN 2001. I BORROWED THE SHIP AND THE HANDHELD CONTROLLER FROM CIVILIAN OPERATIONS

POWERFUL PROJECT

"THE SHIP HAD BEEN DESIGNED FOR HIGH-RISE FIRE RESCUE, BUT I REMEMBER WHAT SERGEANT APONE USED TO SAY 'MARINES DON'T QUIT. THEY *ADAPT*.

"BY THE TIME THEY TRACED US BACK TO BASE IT WOULD BE TOO LATE

'ONE OF THE JOKES OF TAKING A SUICIDE MISSION I SUPPOSE--REPRIMANDS AND COURT-MARTIALS LOSE THEIR STING

POWERFUL

'I FLIPPED OFF THE REMOTE AND WE WERE MACH 2 BEFORE THE LAST PIECE OF PLASTER HIT GROUND LEVEL.'

"FOR YEARS, THE GENERAL PUBLIC HAD BEEN FED THIS IMAGE OF MARINES AS 'INTELLECTUAL WARRIORS'--COLLEGE DIPLOMA IN ONE HAND, M-40 RAPID FIRE IN THE OTHER

"I GUESS IT'S MORE COMFORTING TO IMAGINE THE NATIONAL DEFENSE SYSTEM IN THE HANDS OF A STIFF-EYED, EMOTIONLESS MART NET THAN SOME SCARED TEENAGER WITH A SKIN PROBLEM."

CORPORAL HICKS! IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG?

YEAH, THE DODGERS ARE STILL IN LOS ANGELES AT EASE, SON.

AFTER A WHILE THE MARINES *THEMSELVES* BOUGHT THE MYTH BIG MISTAKE. SOLDIERS HAVE THE SAME WANTS AND DESIRES AS EVERYONE ELSE. SOMETIMES THEY DO THINGS NOT BECAUSE IT'S RIGHT OR WRONG, BUT BECAUSE THEY *MUST*."

WE'RE GOING BACK, AREN'T WE? WE'RE *REALLY* GOING BACK!

"FOR INSTANCE, NOBODY EXPECTS A MARINE CORPORAL TO SMUGGLE AN UNAUTHORIZED PASSENGER ABOARD A TOP SECURITY MILITARY FLIGHT."

"MAYBE THAT'S WHY IT WAS SO DAMN *EASY*."

"STEPHENS WAS GOING TO BE TROUBLE.
"PULLING THOSE PLASMA WEAPONS TO TEACH ME A LESSON IN MILITARY PROTOCOL WAS STUPID
"WAIT UNTIL HE FINDS NEWT TUCKED AWAY IN THE AFT COMPARTMENT
"STILL, I FELT SORRY FOR HIM, JUST LIKE I FELT SORRY FOR THE GRUNTS.
WAR AND THEY
"THE FORCE OF THE LIFT-OFF CRUSHED ANY LAST DOUBTS. I WAS BACK IN SPACE AND NOTHING WAS GOING TO STOP ME."

GREAT SHOW! I HAVEN'T HEARD INDUSTRIAL NOISE LIKE THAT SINCE COLLEGE!

WE DESERVE A LITTLE REC TIME. IT'S BEEN HELL AND A HALF SINCE WE STARTED PLANNING THE INTERCEPT MISSION

1990's HOLOGRAM

DAVID BYRNE

LAURIE ANDE

LAURIE A DAVID BYR

RIGHT NOW EVERYTHING LOOKS GOOD, BUT I'M STILL A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT THAT LAST MINUTE BUSINESS WITH MASSEY

IT WAS A DAMNED STUPID MISTAKE

APPARENTLY ONE OF THE COMMUNICATIONS PEOPLE SENT MASSEY SOME CLASSIFIED MAIL THROUGH AN UNCLASSIFIED CHANNEL

UNFORTUNATELY MASSEY'S SON ACCESSED THE MATERIAL

HEY, MOM! LOOK AT THIS

TOP SECRET

EYES ONLY

OH MY GOD

VERY CARELESS

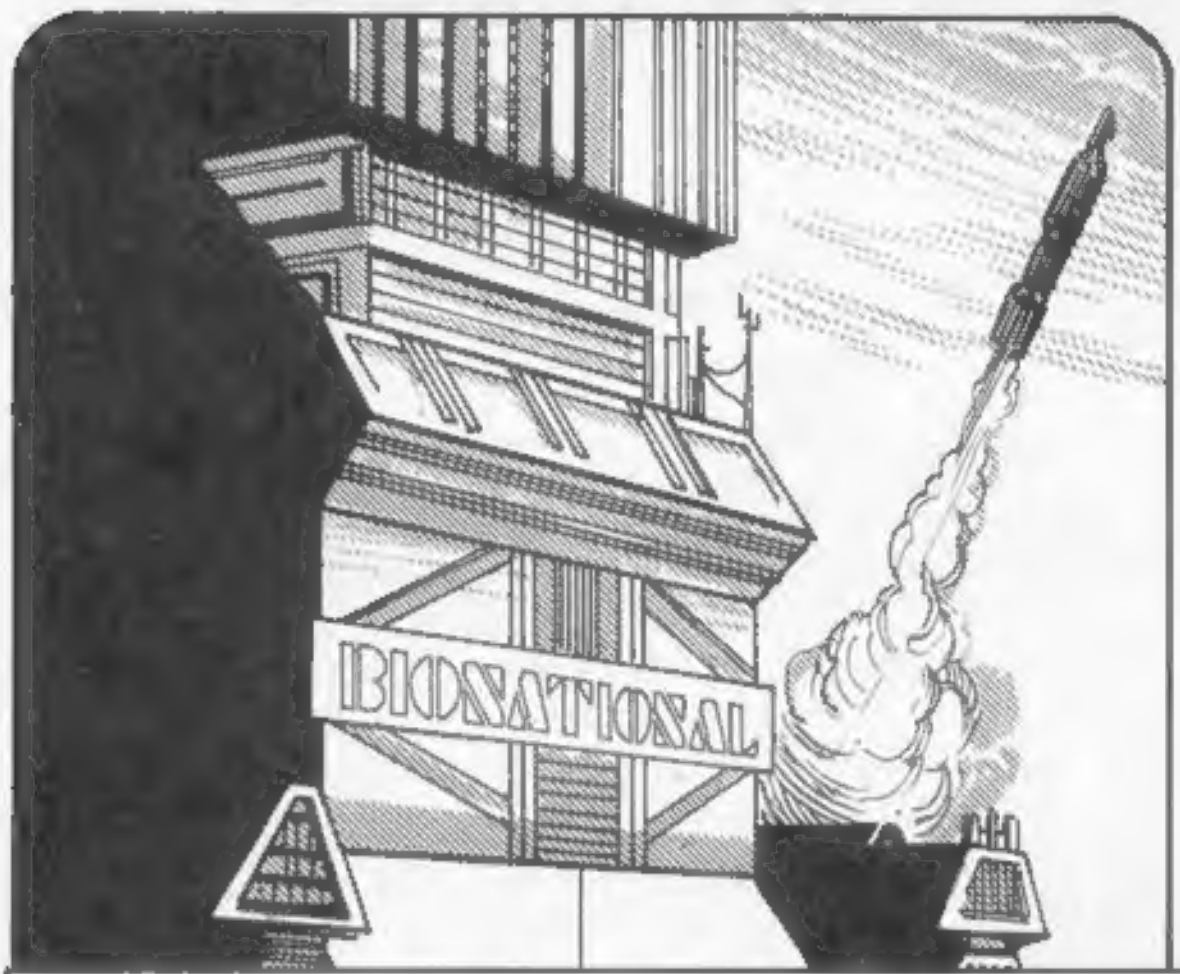
NFORMATIONS SKETCHY AT THIS POINT, BUT MASSEY'S W.FE APPEARS TO HAVE CONFRONTED HIM ABOUT THE DOCUMENT
PAT--WE JUST SAW THIS HORRIBLE--THING-- ON THE READ SCREEN--
TAKE IT EASY MISTER MASSEY
REGULATIONS ARE QUITE CLEAR ON PROCEDURE N CASES LIKE THIS, BUT YOU MUST ADMIT IT WAS AN UNUSUAL SITUATION. HE'D BEEN MARRIED CLOSE TO SIX YEARS
HE TOOK PAINS TO MAKE IT LOOK LIKE A ROBBERY GONE BAD. THE POLICE DIDN'T SUSPECT A THING
UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, MASSEY PERFORMED ADMIRABLY. I HAD THE PSYCH BOYS DO A WORKUP ON HIM R GHT BEFORE LIFTOFF AND HE REGISTERED WELL WITH.N TOLERABLE LIMITS
I WONDER HOW IT FEELS-- BEING A SOCIOPATH I MEAN
I WOULD MAGINE IT'S QUITE LIBERATING

EYES ONLY
DATA LOCK

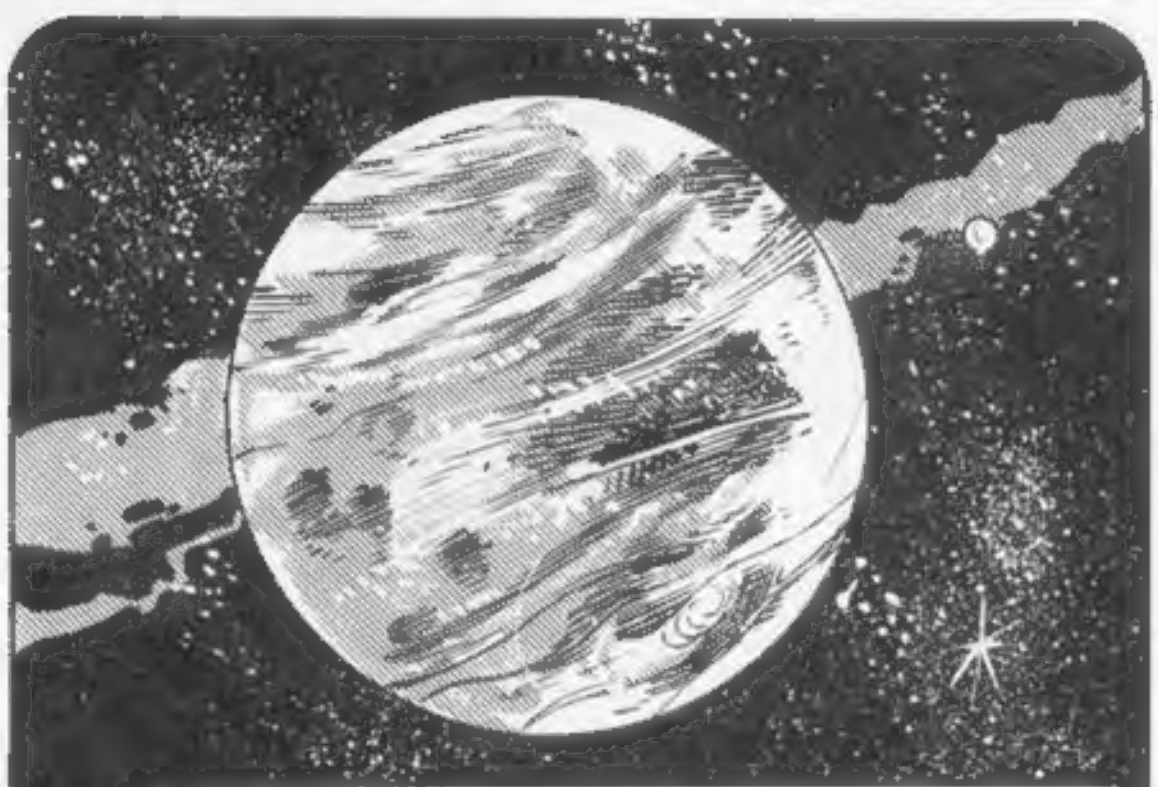
BIONATIONAL
INTERNAL
MEMORANDUM

OPERATION:
OUTREACH

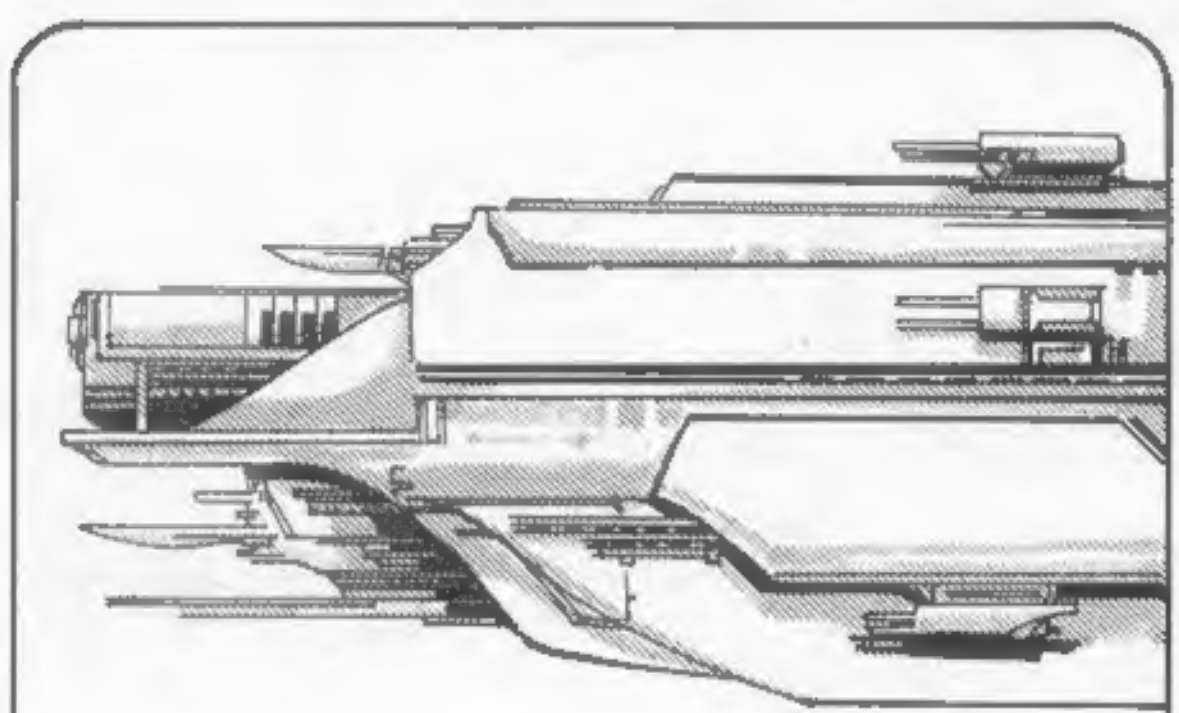
Progress report. The Government vessel *Benedict* launched on schedule 4/5/54. First in command, Col. Stephens, second in command, Cpl. Hicks.



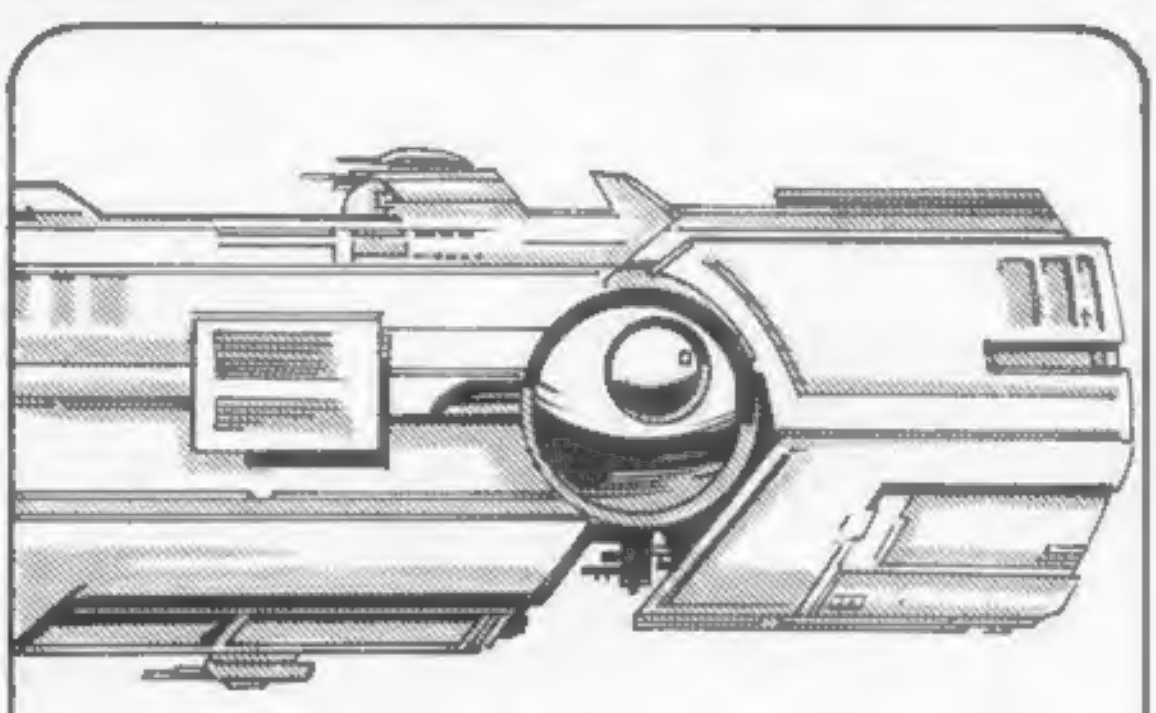
Our chase ship *K-014* launched in pursuit immediately thereafter, captained by Bionational Executive Assistant Patrick Massey.



The government is seeking to retrieve specimens of an alien lifeform for its Weapons Development Program. If they are successful, this could seriously impact Bionational's claim of sole patent right on the new lifeform technology.



The *K-014*'s mission is twofold. First, to follow the *Benedict* to the alien homeworld and gather biological data on the lifeform.



Second, to inhibit the *Benedict*'s crew from retrieving a viable test subject. Captain Massey has been given *carte blanche* toward this end.

In the interim, our Bionational research team continues its examination of the human specimen salvaged from the ejected pilot's pod of the cargo vessel *Junket*.

SOMEONE'S OUT THERE, MOTHER.

CARGO EXPRESS
IDENTIFICATION

VALID FOR TYPE 5

8 2 5 • 7 0 8 3 1

NON-TRANSFERABLE

JAMES LIKOWSKI···SECTION 10-B611
PILOT···CLASSIFICATION 2-S

Human specimen's pod had been damaged, causing loss of atmosphere, but vital signs were somehow *preserved* by the infusion of the alien lifeform.

After retrieval, both specimen's were brought to Bionational's Houston labs for analysis.

SOMETHING TOUCHES ME, MOTHER. I CAN FEEL IT IN MY ARMS, MY CHEST—

Preliminary reports from our weapons specialists are encouraging. Full-scale testing should commence within the next 48 hours. We shall provide daily updates for all members of the Bionational board.

LIKOWSKI
EMERGENCY
EKG
HEART
LUNGS

PROTECT ME, MOTHER. DON'T LET THEM HURT ME—

—PLEASE.

continued next issue!

BUGHUNT

c/o Dark Horse Comics
2008 S.E. Monroe St.
Milwaukie, OR 97222

Dear Mark and Mark,

To Mark Verheiden: the story was great, top quality stuff—and for only a buck ninety-five. That's expensive for most comics, but this ain't no ordinary comic. Fans love it so much you'll be forced to do a regular series.

To Mark Nelson: I met a student of yours who goes to Illinois University. He told me all about your art and about the ***Aliens*** comic. I was on the edge of my seat, and when the comic came out it blew me right off onto my fanny. The artwork is spectacular. I also noticed you were doing covers for the ***Godzilla manga*** series. Did you, or do you do artwork for any other comics? I want to check them out.

Together you guys create one mean comic. And keep it in black and white—it gives it a more errie feeling, like *Psycho* or *Night of the Living Dead.* Both films are classics, and your comic is too. If you start a new series, try to go monthly.

Mark Hong
Wheeling, IL

Monthly? You mean the, er, bi-monthly schedule we've been, uh, sticking to isn't good enough for you, Mark? Seriously, we are striving to get the book back onto the schedule it should be on, but monthly, at least at this point, seems out of reach. Mark Nelson has done other comics work (including Clonezone *at First, several* Skywolf *stories at Eclipse and a number of short features in our anthology book* **Dark Horse Presents***), though the majority of it has not been drawn on the chemically imprinted Duo-Shade paper as* Aliens *is. However, Nelson has a pet project in the planning stages that we'll unveil shortly after the sixth issue of this series.*

Hey, Dark Horse,

You finally got my attention with ***Aliens***. You took a great story and managed to extend the story started by 20th Century Fox. I hope you continue with some great, spine-chilling episodes. It's off to a great start. I don't usually buy your books, but I'll be watching more closely in the future—as will a few others, if I'm any judge. Keep me posted, and thanks for a great issue,

Sharon A. Williams
Tampa, FL

*Thank you, Sharon. Well, you wanted spine-tingling and you got it. And if the events in this issue were spine-tingling, next issue could be described as spine-*wrenching*! And it's a good thing* **Aliens** *finally got your attention. Believe me, you don't want to know what we were going to try next if* **Aliens** *had failed to grab you!*

Dear All,

I've just finished reading ***Aliens*** #1 and felt compelled to write to you. At first I thought this was the comic book adaptation of the film. "How come the big boys didn't get hold of it?" I wondered. Then I realized this story actually carried on from where ***Aliens*** (the movie) ended. Now, I think ***Aliens*** is one of the best sequels I've ever seen. Although it had a different director, it remained faithful to the characters and events in the first film and developed its themes in a different but believable way. Usually sequels are just a money-making rehash of the original.

Now ***Aliens*** (the comic) has continued with the good work. The development of Hicks' and Newt's characters and their psychological trauma is interesting and well-done. I hope to see Ripley in a future issue.

I like the idea of a Space Coast Guard to go along with the Marines. It suggests a parallel development of America's current forces that is believable and well thought-out. When space travel is an every day event, the Coast Guard probably will develop into such an organization.

Mark A. Nelson's excellent artwork has a "dark" quality that I think was evident in both films. Colour would spoil it, I feel, and his aliens are superb.

Well, that's about it. I was going to quibble about the fact that Vasquez and the Lieutenant blew themselves (and several aliens) up in the film, but seeing as how in the comic the scene where Hicks finds their bodies is depicted as Hicks' dream, we can "suspend" reality. So I can't even find a minor fault. Well done, thanks for listening and I look forward to the next five issues.

Yours,

John De la Cruz
London, England

Thanks for the comments, John. Unfortunately, you won't be seeing Ripley in any of the upcoming issues. She simply wasn't written into this particular series—but who knows what the future holds? I should mention that all of the folks we've dealt with at 20th Century Fox have been helpful, and downright excited about the directions we're taking the story in. And, to the few detractors who have written in to berate us for supposed "mistakes" in the storyline or peripheral details, that Fox is fiercely protective of the rights to this series (as

well they should be), and I guarantee you—we'll know **before any issue goes to print** *whether or not there is anything in the story that doesn't jibe with the groundwork laid down in the first two films.*

Hullo,

Aliens #1: Yes, yes, YES!!! This is what it was supposed to be!! I had my reservations concerning this project. They were slim reservations, especially after the preview, but reservations nonetheless.

All my fears were put to rest after reading the first issue. This was very good indeed!

This was the set-up portion of the story. We got to know who was to be involved and learned a little bit about them. Newt is back, and suffering from the same sort of thing Ripley went through after she was rescue at the start of the second movie. Hicks, likewise, is experiencing some severe psychological problems since his return to Earth. And there's this really strange preacher guy who's preaching something involving aliens as saviors, My only question is...what happened to Bishop? He was a survivor too, but he wasn't mentioned once. Please don't make him one of the bad guys.

The art is incredible. I can only hope that the rest of the issues are as well-crafted.

Keep up the great work. I'll keep reading and telling you what I think.

Jay Neale III
Trinity, TX

Do that, Jay. And don't worry—every issue will be as good as the first. What? Do you think we'd give you something less than our best? We're Dark Horse, remember? We don't do that. As for Bishop, let me assure you that he is not one of the "bad guys." In fact, as far as this story's concerned, he's not anything. For all we know the government boys back on Earth took what was left of Bishop (which wasn't much) apart in order to glean all the info they could about the aliens...

Gentlemen,

Congratulations on ***Aliens*** #1. Until recently my interest in black and white comics was limited to back issues of several Marvel magazines and selected independent comics. ***Godzilla*** and ***Aliens*** have changed that considerably.

I must confess that I have never seen either of the two ***Alien/s*** films, but what I read of them convinced me that this (the ***Aliens*** comic book) might make up for all of that. Boy, was I ever right. Mark Nelson's art absolutely blew me away. This is heavy stuff—but why stop at six issues? If enough fans demand it, then make it an unlimited series. I think there is a wealth of material that could be covered here.

One question: Will there be any flashbacks to the two movies, particularly featuring Ripley? Other uninitiated readers might be curious as to her fate in the last film.

Since I doubt there'll be a lettercol in ***Godzilla***, let me say here that ***Godzilla***, like ***Aliens***, is something worth waiting for. I picked up the ***Godzilla Special*** last year and was suitably impressed. The ***manga***-series has lots of potential, too.

Thanks for listening,

Jacob Gilbert
Troy, NY

Gee, why am I wasting my time writing ad copy when we've got fans like you, Jacob? Any other books of ours you'd like to plug? Feel free. You might start with **Concrete** *and* **The American** *and work your way up through* **Mr. Monster** *and* **Roachmill**....

Sorry, but as mentioned above, you won't be seeing any more of Ripley in this series beyond the brief, hazy glimpse of her in issue #1. I would guess you're about the only person in the country who hasn't seen at least one of the two films, but they're available on video everywhere. And don't worry, we'll fill you in enough so that you won't miss anything as the story unfolds.

Okay, keep those letters coming! All of us here at Dark Horse appreciate your comments, and I would guess the people at Fox find them of interest as well!

—Randy

Next issue: *The scene I imagine you've all been waiting for—but with a gruesome twist that will probably have a few med students thinking twice about completing their studies! But I don't want to give too much away, so I guess you'll just have to wait. However, for those of you who just absolutely have to have an* ***Aliens*** *fix before the next issue, check out* ***Dark Horse Presents*** *#24. You can't miss it, it's the one with the big Mark A. Nelson* ALIEN QUEEN *on the cover...and inside, a "pleasant" little side bar story to our series!*